



MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and Council

FROM: Roosevelt Weeks, Director of Libraries *Roosevelt Weeks*

DATE: October 4, 2021

SUBJECT: Free Library Card Access for Travis County Students

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide information about the Library's expansion of access to free Austin Public Library cards to all students in Travis County.

Austin Public Library Cards are free for all city residents, and any person who is not an Austin resident is able to receive a Non-Resident Library Card for a \$30 quarterly or \$120 annual fee. Previously, non-resident children enrolled in the Austin Independent School District or other Independent School Districts located within Austin's ETJ were exempt from the Non-Resident User Fee.

As of October 1, 2021, the user fee will also be waived for any student who either lives in or is enrolled in any school in Travis County – including private school, daycare, charter, and home school students – until the completion of high school.

The change to the Library's fee schedule is the result of an updated budget for the Library approved by the Austin City Council in August and going into effect with the October 1 start of the new fiscal year.

The expansion of access to free Austin Public Library Cards supports the Library's priority of Literacy Advancement, as well as the Culture and Lifelong Learning Strategic Outcome. There are tens of thousands of students who live in Travis County and outside of the city limits who attend school districts other than Austin ISD, many of them in municipalities or unincorporated parts of the county with limited or no library service. By eliminating a financial barrier to accessing the collections at our library branches, as well as to the digital resources available through the Virtual Library, the Library is advancing literacy within the Greater Austin community, as well as providing more people the opportunity to become enriched by Austin's unique civic, cultural, ethnic, and learning opportunities.

Library staff have begun working with multiple Travis County school districts and private schools to provide students library cards directly. Students can also apply for a library card with an adult parent/guardian cosigner at any Austin Public Library location that is currently open for

limited capacity in-person Express Services, or online through the Austin Public Library Card Online Application.

If you have any questions, please contact my office at 512-974-7444.

CC: Spencer Cronk, City Manager
Stephanie Hayden-Howard, Assistant City Manager